

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 IO-12

NIC-01 ACDA-19 GAC-01 MBFR-03 SAJ-01 EB-11 T-03 OMB-01

RSR-01 /143 W

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R 161535 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7272

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 2933

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET REACTION TO FRENCH ELECTIONS

REF: PARIS 6285

1. SUMMARY. OUTCOME OF FRENCH ELECTIONS WAS BEST POSSIBLE FROM STANDPOINT OF BREZHNEV REGIME. RETENTION OF GAULISTS IN POWER AVOIDS ROCKING THE BOAT OF EUROPEAN DETENTE, WHILE RESPECTABLE GAINS BY LEFT COALITION ENABLES SOVIETS WHO ARE MASTERMINDING DETENTE STRATEGY TO HOLD OUT TO DOMESTIC DOUBTERS THE PROSPECT THAT THIS STRATEGY CAN EVENTUALLY LEAD TO PEACEFUL ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY COMMUNISTS. IN THEIR EUPHORIA, SOVIETS EVEN SEEM TO HAVE FORGIVEN MITTERAND. END SUMMARY.

2. WE WOULD JUDGE THAT ANALYSIS OF SOVIET ATTITUDE ON FRENCH ELECTION REFLECTED REFTEL IS CORRECT AS REGARDS MOSCOW'S PREFERENCE THAT AT THIS POINT IN TIME POMPIDOU NOT BE TURNED OUT OF OFFICE BY LEFTISTS. BREZHNEV ACCOMMODATED POMPIDOU BY RECEIVING HIM AT MINSK, AND SOVIET PRESS PULLED ITS PUNCHES IN REPORTING CAMPAIGN (FOR EXAMPLE BY ASCRIBING ANTI- COMMUNIST STATEMENTS TO " RIGHTISTS" AND NOT TO POMPIDOU PERSONALLY).
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3. AT THE SAME TIME, WE WOULD NOT DISMISS AS MERE RHETORIC THE POST- ELECTION SOVIET ANALYSIS, WHICH PLAYS UP MANGITUDE OF LEFTISTS' GAINS. THE UNDERLYING MESSAGE OF THIS ANALYSIS OF SOVIET READERS, WE BELIEVE, IS THAT DETENTE AND PEACEFUL PARLIAMENTARY METHODS COMBINED CAN OPEN WAY FOR EVENTUAL COMMUNIST VICTORIES. ILLUSTRATING THIS APPROACH IS EDITORIAL IN CURRENT ISSUE (NO. 11) OF WEEKLY NEW TIMES, WHICH CITES LEFTIST ELECTORAL SUCCESSES IN FRANCE, CHILE AND BANGLADESH AS EVIDENCE OF A WORLD- WIDE LEFTIST SURGE AND AS EVIDENCE THAT COMMUNISTS ARE FAR- SIGHTED AND UNDERSTAND THE " HIGH REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL OF THE PROCESSES WHICH ARE CHANING THE WORLD"

4. CONTRASTING WITH THE BOMBAST OF " UNOFFICIAL" PRESS COMMENTARY, HOWEVER, IS CENTRAL COMMITTEE MESSAGE TO PCF CC AND TO MARCHAIS, PUBLISHED MARCH 15, WHICH AUSTERELY EXTENDED CONGRATULATIONS FOR THE " SERIOUS SUCCESS" ACHIEVED IN ELECTION.

5. ONE OF BITTER PILLS SOVIETS HAVE HAD TO SWALLOW WAS THE SOCIALIST LEADER MITTERRAND, WHO BLOTTED HIS COPYBOOK BY KEEPING CZECHOSLOVAK ISSUE OPEN. SOVIET PRESS HAS NOW TAKEN TO QUOTING HIM FAVORABLY. (THE DIFFICULTY THIS POSES FOR SOVIETS IS REFLECTED IN MARCH 15 SPEECH IN BERLIN BY PONOMAREV COMMEMORATING COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, IN WHICH FRENCH AND OTHER LEFTIST COALITIONS ARE PRAISED BUT WARNING IS ENTERED AGAINST SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS WHO " REPEAT THE LIES OF IMPERIALIST TROUBADORS.")
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